



## State of Connecticut

### SENATE

STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**SENATOR KEVIN KELLY**  
TWENTY-FIRST SENATE DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
SUITE 3400  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591  
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8800  
TOLL FREE: (800) 842-1421  
FAX: (860) 240-8306  
E-Mail: [Kevin.Kelly@cga.ct.gov](mailto:Kevin.Kelly@cga.ct.gov)  
[www.SenatorKevinKelly.com](http://www.SenatorKevinKelly.com)

**RANKING MEMBER**

AGING COMMITTEE

INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

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### Transportation Committee Public Hearing Senator Kevin Kelly February 13, 2013

Good Morning Chairmen Maynard and Guerrera, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 227, *AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPANSION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE ON THE WATERBURY BRANCH OF THE METRO NORTH RAILROAD*.

The intention of this proposal is to make public transportation a more attractive option for Metro North commuters.

Increasing usage of mass transportation in Connecticut is dependent upon our ability to offer a convenient alternative to driving. Metro North train usage is extremely high for Connecticut residents traveling to and from New York City for two reasons. First, it is more convenient than driving because you can get anywhere from Grand Central Station by taxi, subway, or bus. Second, it is less expensive than driving and parking. However, the same conveniences are not available to in-state commuters. Once they get to their destination stations there is no convenient way for them to get to their office unless their business provides a shuttle.

Senate Bill 227 would increase the number and frequency of trains running on the Waterbury line, and would add stops in Seymour, Shelton and Derby, easing the congestion on Route 8. Again, this measure addresses the issue of convenience.

So many commuters rely on rail service as a means to a less congested and more cost-effective way to work. By expanding passenger service on the Waterbury rail line, folks will have access to frequent and convenient train services, thereby reducing traffic and emissions on Route 8 and the I-95 corridors.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you this morning. I believe that these small steps will lead to significant improvements in our public transportation system, and I urge the committee's favorable consideration.